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Like a flower full of colour but without fragrance are the fair words which bear no fruit in action.

—*The Dhammapada*

THEOSOPHY

VOLUME 63 AUGUST, 1975 NUMBER 10

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

CULTURE AND LEARNING

NO writer of the nineteenth century remotely approached H. P. Blavatsky in the vigor of a social criticism founded on a clear conception of human goals and possibilities. While that period of rising industrialism, ruthless acquisitive enterprise, imperialism, and Victorian complacency generated an articulate opposition of angry men—"Nihilists, and Anarchists, men of the Terror," H.P.B. called them—her work, unlike theirs, sought no remedy in violence or bitter retaliation. Her denunciations of the weaknesses and flaws of Western civilization were impersonal; she made no class or group a scapegoat for the increasing woes of the world, but pointed to ignorance of the spiritual nature of man as the fundamental cause of both individual and social pain.

Her criticisms, moreover, were made in a framework of historical understanding—a general metaphysical scheme of human development or evolution—which promised at least the possibility of comprehending the bewildering mixture of moral and intellectual qualities summed up by the term "civilization," and she pointed to the attitudes and ideas most needed for there to be a change for the better. The foundation for what she says concerning the human condition is stated in *The Secret Doctrine,* where it is shown that man is a dual being constituted of a higher intelligence and a lower or personal ego. In the early stages of man's development as a species, there is primary emphasis on his

physical evolution, with, she says, "a proportionate loss of spirituality." (II, 110.) She continues:

> Then, from the turning point, it is the Higher Ego, or incarnating principle, the *nous* or *Mind,* which reigns over the animal Ego, and rules it whenever it is not carried down by the latter. In short, Spirituality is on its ascending arc, and the animal or physical impedes it from steadily progressing on the path of its evolution only when the selfishness of the *personality* has so strongly infected the real *inner* man with its lethal *virus,* that the upward attraction has lost all its power on the thinking reasonable man. In sober truth, vice and wickedness are an *abnormal, unnatural* manifestation, at this period of our human evolution—at least they ought to be so. The fact that mankind was never more selfish and vicious than it is now, civilized nations having succeeded in making of the first an ethical characteristic, of the second an art, is an additional proof of the exceptional nature of the phenomenon.

Elsewhere H.P.B. pointed out that the soul-blinding materialism of the eighteenth century was inherited by the scientists and the educated world of the nineteenth century as an "hereditary disease"—"The divine intellect is veiled in man; his animal brain alone *philosophizes.*" (*Isis Unveiled* I, 247.) What caused this determined skepticism and unbelief? The fault lay largely, as the literature of the eighteenth century makes plain, in the dogmas and oppressions of the Church, which the active intellectuality and moral outrage of the time rejected with resolute passion. Those who were to shape the thinking of later generations of scholars and scientists—such ardent humanitarians and anti-clerical enemies of religion as Baron d'Holbach, Lamettrie, and the *philosophes*—were determined to remove all ground for thinking in terms of spiritual forces or intelligences. As H.P.B. remarked in *The Secret Doctrine* (I, 529), the "extra-cosmic" God of orthodox Christian belief had "killed every possibility of belief in *intra* cosmic intelligent Forces," with the result that all the sciences developed on the basis of mechanistic or materialistic assumptions.

Such conceptions of natural reality afforded no basis for moral restraint, and doctrines of self-interest, joined with social applications of Darwinism, and with the hedonism which so easily fills every ethical vacuum, were in the nineteenth century rapidly changing the face of Europe, giving Western societies the ugly characteristics which have reached horrifying dimensions in our

wn time. In one of her most uncompromisingly severe criticisms, ublished in *Lucifer* for May, 1891—the month of her death—H.P.B. wrote of "modern civilization":

> Skin-deep in reality in its visible effects, in the "blessings" it is alleged to have given to the world, its roots are rotten to the core. It is to its progress that selfishness and materialism, the greatest curses of the nations, are due; and the latter will most surely lead to the annihilation of art and of the appreciation of the truly harmonious and beautiful. . . . It is this universal tendency, which by propelling humanity, through its ambition and selfish greed, to an incessant chase after wealth and the obtaining *at any price* of the supposed blessings of this life, causes it to aspire or rather gravitate to one level, the lowest of all—the plane of empty appearance. Materialism and indifference to all save the selfish realization of wealth and power, and the over-feeding of national and personal vanity, have gradually led nations and men to the almost entire oblivion of spiritual ideals, of the love of nature, to the correct appreciation of things.

The much older societies of Asia, she said, were going mad n a passion for "*aping* Europe." These once wiser and higher civilizations seemed determined to reduce their culture to the same level as "canting, greedy and artificial Europe." She continues, using language that many found extreme in those days, but which can now be recognized as wholly appropriate, and applying even more directly to the culture of the United States:

> For certainly Europe is all this. It is canting and deceitful from its diplomats down to its custodians of religion, from its political down to its social laws, selfish, greedy and brutal beyond expression in its grabbing characteristics. And yet there are those who wonder at the gradual decadence of true art, as if art could exist without imagination, fancy, and a just appreciation of the beautiful in *Nature*, or without poetry and high religious, hence, metaphysical aspirations! The galleries of paintings and sculpture, we hear, become every year poorer in quality, if richer in quantity. It is lamented that while there is a plethora of ordinary productions, the greatest scarcity of remarkable pictures and statuary prevails. . . .
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> Owing to the triumphant march and invasion of civilization, Nature, as well as man and ethics, is sacrificed, and is fast becoming artificial. Climates are changing, and the face of the whole world will soon be altered. Under the murderous hand of the pioneers of civilization, the destruction of whole primeval forests is leading to the drying up of rivers. . . . A few years more and there will not remain within a radius of fifty miles around our large cities one single rural spot inviolate from

> vulgar speculation. . . . The pure air of the country is polluted with smoke, the smells of greasy railway-engines, and the sickening odours of gin, whisky, and beer. And once that every natural spot in the surrounding scenery is gone, and the eye of the painter finds but the artificial and hideous products of modern speculation to rest upon, artistic taste will have to follow suit and disappear along with them.

There is hardly a need to call attention to the endless repetition of these criticisms in the present. While modern writers may avoid use of simple words like "selfish," and are disinclined to recognize the reality of the moral struggle in individuals—generalizing, instead, at the level of social behavior, ecological disaster, and the phenomena of "mass culture"—their indictments nonetheless focus on the now omnipresent signs of moral decline, artificiality, and ugliness. Here one writer may stand for scores who have been saying virtually the same thing for some fifteen or twenty years. In *The Tower and the Abyss,* Erich Kahler spoke of the uses of leisure by the typical American:

> For entertainment the man turns on his radio or his TV, he goes to the movies where, again, for the most part, he is served specialized, functionalized events, attitudes, feelings—attitudes and feelings which are utterly untrue in a human sense, but are shaped according to what Hollywood considers the desires, the predilections, the notions of the masses. Now it can hardly be denied that the masses of people do relish a beautiful car, a gorgeous estate, a sweet romance, and the thrill of a juicy crime; they are certainly longing to satisfy their sadistic drives and their gambling itches, and, finally, after all these gratifications have been amply indulged in, they still want to see justice triumph. And while these are doubtless popular wishes which the entertainment industry feels it must satisfy, the film and TV producers' usual response is to *outdo* such attitudes and responses in a particular direction. They isolate them, take them out of their human context and texture, decentralize, dehumanize, functionalize them, reduce them to bare effects; so that we see a crime as such, a romance as such, and the characters are treated as mere appendages, as mannequins specially adjusted to their prefabricated experiences. . . . In this way Hollywood as well as magazine and best-seller fiction, actually shape people's characters. A person cannot be persistently and helplessly exposed to such crude influences without gradually succumbing to them.

In *The Key to Theosophy* H. P. Blavatsky examined the effect of education in the late nineteenth century. She wrote:

> What is the *real* object of modern education? Is it to cultivate and develop the mind in the right direction . . . ?

. . . Every young man and boy, nay, every one of the younger generation of schoolmasters will answer: "The object of modern education is to pass examinations," a system not to develop right emulation, but to generate and breed jealousy, envy, hatred almost, in young people for one another, and thus train them for a life of ferocious selfishness and struggle. . . . And what are these examinations—the terror of modern boyhood and youth? They are simply a method of classification by which the results of your school teaching are tabulated. In other words, they form the practical application of the modern science method to the *genus homo, qua* intellection. Now "science" teaches that intellect is a result of the mechanical interaction of the brain-stuff; therefore it is only logical that modern education should be almost entirely mechanical—a sort of automatic machine for the fabrication of intellect by the ton. Very little experience of examinations is enough to show that the education they produce is simply a training of the physical memory, and, sooner or later, all your schools will sink to this level. As to any real, sound cultivation of the thinking and reasoning power, it is simply impossible while everything has to be judged by the results as tested by competitive examinations. Again, school training is of the very greatest importance in forming character, especially in its moral bearing. Now, from first to last, your modern system is based on the so-called scientific revelations: "The struggle for existence" and the "survival of the fittest." All through his early life, every man has these driven into him by practical example and experience, as well as by direct teaching, till it is impossible to eradicate from his mind the idea that "self," the lower, personal, animal self, is the end-all, and be-all, of life. Here you get the great source of all the after-misery, crime, and heartless selfishness. . . .

The practical commercial begets the modern side, and the ancient and orthodox classical reflects its heavy respectability. . . . we see the scientific and material commercial supplanting the effete orthodox and classical. . . . Thus, the energies generated by the brain molecules of its adherents are all concentrated on one point, and are, therefore, to some extent, an organized army of *educated* and speculative intellects of the minority of men, trained against the hosts of the ignorant, simple-minded masses doomed to be vampirised, lived and sat upon by their intellectually stronger brethren. . . . Result: The direct outcome of this branch of education is an overflooding of the market with money-making machines, with heartless selfish men—animals—who have been most carefully trained to prey on their fellows and take advantage of the ignorance of their weaker brethren!

It would take many pages, indeed, volumes, to illustrate the

frequency of such criticism in recent times. Arthur Jensen, for one, has made it clear that grades given to the young in school have for their primary purpose the identification of candidates for the better jobs in industry and business; in fact, the school system, he showed, is little more than a training ground and selective employment agency for the free enterprise sector of the economy, paid for by taxes. Eminent critics of education such as Alexander Meiklejohn and F. R. Leavis have pointed out that the examination system is the enemy of all real learning, being conducive to the most superficial habits of thought—better, Leavis said, for developing journalists than anything else. The general condemnation of examinations by responsible educators has been so well publicized as to need no examples, and the failure of the examination system to identify potentially good doctors in the medical schools has been exposed by leading medical educators. Meanwhile, the ineffectual character of public school education in the United States was recently the subject of devastating analysis by the noted historian, Henry Steele Commager—in an article in the *Saturday Review* for Jan. 11 of this year. Even with the best intentions, he said, the schools cannot possibly teach the young ideals and develop moral qualities which are consistently ignored by the common practice in society, business, and political affairs:

> Thus society applauds the principle of racial equality but does not itself provide the young an example of such equality —knowing instinctively that the example is more dangerous than the admonition. . . . Thus society approves when schools celebrate—as they must in teaching the virtues of a Washington, a Jefferson, a Franklin—service to the commonwealth but rewards private, not public, enterprise. . . . It expects schools to teach respect for the law but elects to high office a President and a Vice-President who display only contempt for the law. . . .
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> After 40 years of exposure to world culture, world politics, world geography, we have turned out to be culturally more alienated, politically more isolated, economically more reckless, and, on the world scene, more chauvinistic and militaristic than at any previous time in our history.

It can only follow, says Dr. Commager, that "Much of education today is a massive demonstration in hypocrisy, and it is folly to suppose that the young do not know this."

The division of higher education into a number of academic specialties has resulted in almost total loss of the idea or goal

of a general education. The university is no longer a university, but a *multi*versity, lacking even a conceptual basis for integration. Science makes no judgments concerning values or ends, and even the humanistic studies have been degraded by this moral relativism into courses in the minutia of technical scholarship. All this is well known to the critics of the higher learning. Gone, also, is the ideal of the "educated man," as Albert Jay Nock pointed out a generation ago. With the multiplication of specialties has come an enormous verbosity and at the same time expansion of the "research" aspect of learning, bringing a twofold problem. First, no one person can hope to master more than a small part of any familiar division of modern scholarship or science, while, second, the narrow focus of specialization tends to shut out possibility of a general understanding of the over-all human situation.

Commenting on this growing diversity of material in an article in the Spring *American Scholar,* William J. Bouwsma, a historian at the University of California in Berkeley, remarks that a confusing conflict of goals must be the result.

> This [he continues] suggests that we face a problem not altogether new but now aggravated beyond anything known before: that we have inherited too much and from too many directions to be able to manage our cultural resources. Thus we now have no classics because we have too many classics. To pose our problem in its starkest and most dismal terms, how can an educational ideal bring into focus a culture that Joyce compared to the scattered debris on the field of Waterloo and that only achieved coherence in his peculiar artistic vision? Unlike antiquity, which had the practical advantage of knowing culture but not cultures, in our age we have effectively lost the ability to recognize a barbarian when we meet him.

It is just as Camus said in *The Myth of Sisyphus*: "there are truths but no truth."

Turning directly to the arts, we find an essayist, Wilhelmina Van Ness, saying in the *American Scholar* (Spring, 1974):

> It became aesthetically and psychologically necessary for artists to justify the only art that could be created in the modern environment and the aesthetic and behavioral regressions into primitivism, madness and childishness that it often depicted and represented, as bizarre forms of progress. . . . Human needs to admire and enjoy have been systematically ignored, and values have been abandoned or deferred to the judgments of history and the future. This consistent absence of value and support for people living in the present has provoked a perti-

> nent public distrust of artists and of modern and contemporary art forms. . . . The absolute ideals of truth, the good, the beautiful and nature literally belong to past ages of belief and are conspicuously absent today.

The most telling comment by this writer is that twentieth-century culture "has almost wholly incapacitated modern and contemporary men from being able to desire directly or orient themselves toward truth."

Five years ago, Alfred Alvarez, a well-known art critic, wrote in the London *Times Literary Supplement* that "we go through styles in the arts as quickly as we go through socks; so quickly, in fact, that there seem no longer any real styles at all." A little earlier, speaking of the New Novelists of France in the Winter 1965-66 *American Scholar,* Storm Jameson, an English writer, said that the books of one innovator present "a kaleidoscope of moods," with "communication between them little more coherent than a conversation on crossed telephone wires." This "irrational philosophy," she added, "lays an ax to the roots of any intelligible vision of reality, so that by an ironical paradox the New Novelists devalue man, rob him of his identity, as fatally as does the most menacing product of technology." And of an American writer made popular by the recent preoccupation with drugs, she wrote:

> An attack on the conventions—which can be gay and salutary and life-giving—begins to shock me when it becomes an attack on our self-respect and decent self-love. The roots joining a literature of self-contempt and self-hatred to the worlds of Belsen and Auschwitz run underground, but they run.

A few years ago the distinguished artist, Marc Chagall, wrote in a widely published essay:

> *Why have we become so anxious in recent times?*
>
> The more audaciously man has freed himself from his so-called chains, the more he feels alone, lost in the multitude, a prisoner of his destiny. . . . I painted pictures upside down. I cut off heads and hacked my subjects to bits, left floating in the air in my pictures . . . our world seems to be a smaller world on which we small ones swarm, clinging to the smallest elements in our nature, until we submerge ourselves in the tiny pieces of our nature, even in the atom. . . .

Literature and its dependencies in the arts are plainly a confession of social life, a mirror of thought and feeling—unmistakable evidence that the predictions made by H.P.B. concerning the effects of materialism have been fulfilled. She wrote of the

increasing animality of attitudes and habits, the degradation of the arts, the dehumanization of social life, and the demoralization of education—all major themes of present-day criticism. There is of course widespread and growing protest, often taking the form of angry rebellion, and sometimes nihilist destructiveness. Evident, too, is the emerging sweep of another spirit—sometimes spoken of as the "counter-culture"—confused in character, sometimes animated by desperation, sometimes high in visionary hope. Lacking, however, is a consistently rational basis for the reforms so unevenly and impulsively attempted or begun.

In her first message to the American Theosophists (at the Convention of 1888) H.P.B. wrote urgently of the materialism which, she said, only Theosophy could overcome, by reason of its explanatory metaphysical teachings. Materialism, in her definition, is not only negation of spirit, but selfishness, hypocrisy, and "the fruits of a disbelief in all but material things."

> The tendency of modern civilization is a reaction towards animalism, towards a development of those qualities which conduce to the success in life of man as an animal in the struggle for animal existence. Theosophy seeks to develop the human nature in man in addition to the animal, and at the sacrifice of the superfluous animality which modern life and materialistic teachings have developed to a degree which is abnormal for the human being at this stage of his progress.

There can be little doubt, today, of the accuracy of this diagnosis. Will the remedy, so simply stated here, have greater acceptance during years to come?

The very first step in true mysticism and true occultism is to try to apprehend the meaning of Universal Brotherhood, without which the very highest progress in the practice of magic turns to ashes in the mouth.

—WILLIAM Q. JUDGE

letters · questions · comment

The Theosophical philosophy seems to present the conception of selfhood or identity in distinctly different terms for the student. It appears we are not so much in search of "identity" as engaged in deciding who or what we are, again and again, in varying relationships. Can we say, then, that we are what we "think" we are?

A thoughtful approach to many of the mysteries of life (or of human consciousness) seems implied by this question. Every act is in some way a decision and a declaration of identity. It is based on knowledge of some sort, either consciously or as a matter of habit. When Mr. Judge counsels us to try to see a deep occult significance in every experience that comes to us, he is giving much the same advice as Socrates' "The unexamined life is not worth living."

The search for the Self has been variously characterized through the ages. It is the object of Arjuna's struggle, of Rama's heroic enterprise, of Galahad's hope of finding the Holy Grail, of every Odyssey of the Soul. The metaphysics offered by Theosophy are a map or blue print for guidance in this quest in an age of heightened self-consciousness. Doctrines afford clear advantage of precise philosophical expression, in contrast to the ambiguities of symbolism, yet there are also hazards appropriate to the dawning manasic capacities of modern man. Encountering, for example, the various modes of characterization of the immortal aspect of the human being, the inquirer may find himself prone to habits of hard and fast expression, which bar the way to direct realization. The Self eludes definition. What can be described are the pathways to action under the limitations which circumscribe the immortal ego in incarnation. These are to be discovered through exploration of the seven principles in man in relation to the planes of nature.

While one pursues this understanding, it is natural to form a mental conception of what one is looking for, and this is a stand taken, a motive adopted, a goal conceived. Yet even here there is paradox, since the Self is not external, as in symbolic represen-

ations of the quest, but within, and without attributes. The Self s not to be "known," but to be realized; which is to say, we become what we truly are.

The spirit of the search is crucial since the results and values of any one lifetime are determined by how much of the consciousness of the personality can be permanently assimilated by the higher ego after death. For even though the personality is constantly changing and perishable, it is nonetheless the means of giving embodiment, here, to enduring values, just as the flower which, though ephemeral, provides brief expression to eternal symmetries and beauty. The personality undertakes this high and ennobling work through the conscious resolve of the ego; it is chosen by the mind, and the raw materials of the task come to the soul in the relationships of the world of experience.

Every thoughtful individual, when he turns to the question of identity, thinks of himself as "something," even though, quite naturally, a formulation in definite terms will not be possible. The student of Theosophy, by reason of his reliance on an understanding of the sevenfold constitution, finds himself confronted by the need to choose what man—or self—he will become: the enduring being or the transitory man. He "becomes" the higher Ego—Manas united with Buddhi—by seeking to identify in every experience the elements which relate to the growth of the soul. The processes of this egoic unfoldment have classic expression in *The Secret Doctrine* (I, 40):

> Whatever plane our consciousness may be acting in, both we and the things belonging to that plane are, for the time being, our only realities. As we rise in the scale of development we perceive that during the stages through which we have passed we mistook shadows for realities, and the upward progress of the Ego is a series of progressive awakenings, each advance bringing with it the idea that now, at last, we have reached "reality"; but only when we shall have reached the absolute Consciousness, and blended our own with it, shall we be free from the delusions produced by Maya.

The decision to find out what one's "self" really is shows, therefore, that the continuing entity is at least recognized, if not yet fully understood.

Identity is at root One. But during progressive manifestation identity acquires different meanings when applied to different parts of man's nature. What we ordinarily regard as our identity may be thought of as all our knowledge of "things"—the familiar

functions of the world we live in, including whatever we consider to be "I"—occupation, relationships, strengths and weaknesses, etc. But the identity of the higher Self is the *power* to learn and to do; and that of the individuality has been described as the developed *consciousness* of existence in spirit, whether in or out of a body, which becomes present to our awareness in some degree, and manifest in the excellences of what we know and strive to do.

This leads naturally to the question of why, once we recognize the help and reasonableness in this view of man, we may still find it difficult to see clearly and learn readily what we desire to know. Yet we need to ask ourselves how much we understand of the task now consciously undertaken. What sort of maturity is required for grasp of the "rate" of progress in human evolution? The vast periods of time given in the Theosophical teaching of cycles have some importance here. And attention may be needed, also, to the qualification, "checked by Karma," spoken of under the Third Proposition of the Secret Doctrine. While regret is not an emotion strengthening to the soul's purposes, it may be necessary to consider the possibility of lost opportunities in the past, and of duties neglected. How many people, for example, create for themselves feelings of identity made up of the thoughts and opinions of masses of men, projected into institutions and conventional attitudes?

The task, it seems plain, is to withdraw our sense or feeling of identity from the personality as "I," and place it in that power to know, to do, to learn, universal and in every being; then to create such physical and psychological correspondences in the lower sheaths as shall be subservient to the purposes of that Krishna in every man. This, moreover, is the process of transforming the matter in all of the sheaths from merely bearers of blind memories to incarnated discrimination in every action.

STUDIES IN ISIS UNVEILED

SPIRITUAL IDENTITY

THE *Ineffable name*, in the search for which so many vainly consume their knowledge and lives, dwells latent in the heart of every man.

A man can have no god that is not bounded by his own human conceptions. The wider the sweep of his spiritual vision, the mightier will be his deity. But where can we find a better demonstration of Him than in man himself; in the spiritual and divine powers lying dormant in every human being? From the remotest antiquity *mankind* as a whole *have always been convinced of the existence of a personal spiritual entity within the personal physical man*. This inner entity was more or less divine, according to its proximity to the *crown*—Chrestos. This belief is neither bigotry nor superstition, only an ever-present, instinctive feeling of the proximity of another spiritual and invisible world, which, though it be subjective to the senses of the outward man, is perfectly objective to the inner ego. Humanity is the highest manifestation on earth of the Unseen Supreme Deity, and each man an incarnation of his God.

Is it enough for man to know that he exists? Is it enough to be formed a human being to enable him to deserve the appellation of MAN? To become a genuine spiritual entity, which that designation implies, man must first *create* himself anew, so to speak, *i.e.*, thoroughly eliminate from his mind and spirit, not only the dominating influence of selfishness and other impurity, but also the infection of superstition and prejudice. The latter is far different from what we call *antipathy* or *sympathy*. We are at first irresistibly or unwittingly drawn within its dark circle by that peculiar influence, that powerful current of magnetism which emanates from ideas as well as from physical bodies. By this we are surrounded, and finally prevented through moral cowardice—fear of public opinion—from stepping out of it. It is rare that men regard a thing in either its true or false light, accepting the conclusion by the free action

NOTE.—This series is made up of passages from *Isis Unveiled*, topically arranged. The pages from which the statements are taken are given at the end of each installment. The series was first printed in volumes 5 and 6 of THEOSOPHY.

of their own judgment. Quite the reverse. The conclusion is more commonly reached by blindly adopting the opinion current at the hour among those with whom they associate. The work now submitted to public judgment is offered to such as are willing to accept truth wherever it may be found, and to defend it, even looking popular prejudice straight in the face. The clergy apart, none but the logician, the investigator, the dauntless explorer, should meddle with books like this. Such delvers after truth have the courage of their opinions.

When, years ago, we first traveled over the East, we came in contact with certain men, endowed with such mysterious powers and such profound knowledge that we may truly designate them as the sages of the Orient. To their instructions we lent a ready ear. They showed us that by combining science with religion, the existence of God and immortality of man's spirit may be demonstrated like a problem of Euclid. The Oriental philosophy has room for no other faith than an absolute and immovable faith in the omnipotence of man's own immortal self. This omnipotence comes from the kinship of man's spirit with the Universal Soul—God! Science, theology, every human hypothesis and conception born of imperfect knowledge, lost forever their authoritative character in our sight.

Such knowledge is priceless; and it has been hidden only from those who overlooked it, derided it, or denied its existence. Our *Ego,* that which lives and thinks and feels independently of us in our mortal casket, does more than believe. It *knows* that there exists a God in nature, for the sole and invincible Artificer of all lives in us as we live in Him. No dogmatic faith or exact science is able to uproot that intuitional feeling inherent in man, when he has once fully realized it in himself. Difficult, nay, impossible, as it seems to science to find out the invisible, universal motor of all —*Life,* to explain its nature, or even to suggest a reasonable hypothesis for the same, the mystery is but half a mystery, not merely for the great adepts and seers, but even for true and firm believers in a spiritual world. To the simple believer, there remains divine *faith.* The latter is firmly rooted in his inner senses; in his unerring intuition, with which cold reason has naught to do, he *feels* it cannot play him false. Let human-born, erroneous dogmas, and theological sophistry contradict each other; let one crowd off the other, and the subtile casuistry of one creed fell to the ground the crafty reasoning of another; truth remains one, and there is

not a religion, whether Christian or heathen, that is not firmly built upon the rock of ages—God and immortal spirit.

"There is a *personal* God, and there is a *personal* Devil!" thunders the Christian preacher. "There is no personal God, except the grey matter in our brain," contemptuously replies the materialist, "and there is no Devil." Between Science and Theology is a bewildered public, fast losing all belief in man's personal immortality, in a deity of any kind, and rapidly descending to the level of mere animal existence.

Human nature is like universal nature in its abhorrence of a vacuum. It feels an intuitional yearning for a Supreme Power. Mankind have one innate, irrepressible craving. This is the yearning after the proofs of immortality. How could such a belief have stood for the countless ages, were it not that among all nations, whether civilized or savage, man *has been* allowed the demonstrative proof? Is not the very existence of such a belief an evidence that thinking philosopher and unreasoning savage have both been compelled to acknowledge the testimony of their senses? Being forbidden to search for Him where alone His traces would be found, man filled the aching void with the personal God whom his spiritual teachers built up for him from the crumbling ruins of heathen myths and hoary philosophies of old. How otherwise explain the mushroom growth of new sects, some of them absurd beyond degree?

Sincere skepticism as to the immortality of man's soul is a malady; a malformation of the physical brain, and has existed in every age. As there are infants born with a caul upon their heads, so there are men who are incapable to their last hour of ridding themselves of that kind of caul evidently enveloping their organs of spirituality. Those who resign themselves to a materialistic existence, shutting out the divine radiance shed by their spirit, at the beginning of the earthly pilgrimage, and stifling the warning voice of that faithful sentry, the conscience, which serves as a focus for the light in the soul—such beings as these, having left behind conscience and spirit, and crossed the boundaries of matter, will of necessity have to follow its laws.

We are at the bottom of a cycle and evidently in a transitory state. Plato divides the intellectual progress of the universe during every cycle into fertile and barren periods. During the barren periods the spiritual sight of the majority of mankind is so blinded as to lose every notion of the superior powers of its own divine

spirit. We are in a barren period: the eighteenth century, during which the malignant fever of skepticism broke out so irrepressibly, has entailed unbelief as an hereditary disease upon the nineteenth. The divine intellect is veiled in man; his animal brain alone *philosophizes*.

Reason, the outgrowth of the physical brain, develops at the expense of instinct—the flickering reminiscence of a once divine omniscience—spirit. Reason avails only for the consideration of material things; it is incapable of helping its possessor to a knowledge of spirit. In losing instinct, man loses his intuitional powers, which are the crown and ultimatum of instinct. Reason is the clumsy weapon of the scientists—intuition the unerring guide of the seer. The brain feeds and lives and grows in strength and power at the expense of its spiritual parent. It aims but at the development and fuller comprehension of natural, earthly life; and thus can discover but the mysteries of physical nature. Its grief and fear, hope and joy, are all closely blended with its terrestrial existence. It ignores all that cannot be demonstrated by either its organs of action or sensation. It begins by becoming virtually dead; it dies at last completely. *It is annihilated*. When death arrives, its iron and clammy grasp finds work with Life as usual; but there is no more a soul to liberate. The whole essence of the latter has already been absorbed by the vital system of the physical man.

There are revelations of the spiritual senses of man which may be trusted far more than all the sophistries of materialism. Instinct is more to be trusted than the most instructed and developed reason, as regards man's *inner* sense which assures him of his immortality. Instinct is the universal endowment of nature by the Spirit of the Deity itself; reason, the slow development of our physical constitution, an evolution of our adult material brain. Instinct, as a divine spark, grows and develops according to the law of the double evolution, physically and spiritually. It is the *divine instinct* in its ceaseless progress of development.

But, if the knowledge of the occult powers of nature opens the spiritual sight of man, enlarges his intellectual faculties, and leads him unerringly to a profounder veneration for the Creator, on the other hand ignorance, dogmatic narrow-mindedness, and a childish fear of looking to the bottom of things, invariably leads to fetish-worship and superstition. Within the limits of his intellectual capabilities the true philosopher knows no forbidden ground, and should be content to accept no mystery of nature as inscrutable and

inviolate. Fanaticism in religion, fanaticism in science, or fanaticism in any other question becomes a hobby, and cannot but blind our senses. "There is no more fatal fallacy than that the truth will prevail by its own force, that it has only to be seen to be embraced. In fact the desire for the actual truth exists in very few minds, and the capacity to discern it in fewer still. When men say they are seeking the truth, they mean that they are looking for evidence to support some prejudice or prepossession. Their beliefs are moulded to their wishes. They see all, and more than all, that seems to tell for that which they desire; they are blind as bats to whatever tells against them. The scientists are no more exempt from this common failing than are others."

Many men have arisen who had glimpses of the truth, and fancied they had it all. Such have failed to achieve the good they might have done and sought to do, because vanity has made them thrust their personality into such undue prominence as to interpose it between their believers and the *whole* truth that lay behind. The world needs no sectarian church, whether of Buddha, Jesus, Mahomet, Swedenborg, Calvin, or any other. There being but ONE TRUTH, man requires but one church—the Temple of God within us, walled in by matter, but penetrable by any one who can find the way; *the pure in heart see God*. If by *Christianity* is meant the external religious forms of worship, then in the eyes of every truly religious man, who has studied ancient exoteric faiths, and their symbology, Christianity is pure heathenism, and Catholicism, with its fetish-worshipping, is far worse and more pernicious than Hinduism in its most idolatrous aspect. The everlasting conflict between the world-religions—Christianity, Judaism, Brahmanism, Paganism, Buddhism, proceeds from this one source: Truth is known but to the few; the rest, unwilling to withdraw the veil from their own hearts, imagine it blinding the eyes of their neighbor. The god of every exoteric religion, including Christianity, notwithstanding its pretensions to mystery, is an idol, a fiction, and cannot be anything else.

There never was, nor can there be more than one universal religion; for there can be but one truth concerning God. Like an immense chain whose upper end, the alpha, remains invisibly emanating from a Deity—in *statu abscondito* with every primitive theology—it encircles our globe in every direction; it leaves not even the darkest corner unvisited, before the other end, the omega, turns back on its way to be again received where it first emanated.

On this divine chain was strung the exoteric symbology of every people. Their variety of form is powerless to affect their substance, and under their diverse ideal types of the universe of matter, symbolizing its vivifying principles, the uncorrupted immaterial image of the spirit of being guiding them is the same. So far as human intellect can go in the ideal interpretation of the spiritual universe, its laws and powers, the last word was pronounced ages since. Let human brains submit themselves to torture for thousands of years to come; let theology perplex faith and mime it with the enforcing of incomprehensible dogmas in metaphysics; and science strengthen skepticism by pulling down the tottering remains of spiritual intuition in mankind, with her demonstrations of its fallibility, eternal truth can never be destroyed. True philosophy and divine truth are convertible terms. A religion which dreads the light cannot be a religion based on either truth or philosophy—hence, it must be false. The ancient Mysteries were mysteries to the profane only, whom the hierophant never sought nor would accept as proselytes; to the initiates the Mysteries became explained as soon as the final veil was withdrawn. No mind like that of Pythagoras or Plato would have contented itself with an unfathomable and incomprehensible mystery, like that of the Christian dogma.

Kapila, Orpheus, Pythagoras, Plato, Basilides, Marcian, Ammonius and Plotinus, founded schools and sowed the germs of many a noble thought, and disappearing left behind them the refulgence of demi-gods. But the three personalities of Christna, Gautama, and Jesus appeared like true gods, each in his epoch, and bequeathed to humanity three religions built on the imperishable rock of ages. That all three, especially the Christian faith, have in time become adulterated, and the latter almost unrecognizable, is no fault of either of the noble Reformers. It is the priestly self-styled husbandmen of the "vine of the Lord" who must be held to account by future generations. Purify the three systems of the dross of human dogmas, the pure essence remaining will be found identical. Gautama-Buddha is mirrored in the precepts of Christ; Paul and Philo Judaeus are faithful echoes of Plato; and Ammonius Saccas and Plotinus won their immortal fame by combining the teachings of all these grand masters of true philosophy. "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good," ought to be the motto of all brothers on earth. Not so is it with the interpreters of the *Bible*.

Spiritual Life is the one primordial principle *above;* Physical Life is the primordial principle *below*, but they are one under

their dual aspect. When the Spirit is completely untrammelled from the fetters of correlation, and its essence has become so purified as to be reunited with its CAUSE, it may—and yet who can tell whether it really will—have a glimpse of the Eternal Truth. Till then, let us not build ourselves idols in our own image, and accept the shadows for the Eternal Light.

A man's idea of God is that image of blinding light that he sees reflected in the concave mirror of his own soul, and yet this is not, in very truth, God, but only His reflection. His glory is there, but it is the light of his own Spirit that the man sees, and it is all that he can bear to look upon. *The clearer the mirror, the brighter will be the divine image.* In the ecstatic Yogin, in the illuminated Seer, the spirit will shine like the noon-day sun; in the debased victim of earthly attraction, the radiance has disappeared, for the mirror is obscured with the stains of matter. Such men deny their God, and would willingly deprive humanity of soul at one blow.

The profoundest and most transcendental speculations of the ancient metaphysicians are all based on that great principle underlying the whole of their religious metaphysics—*illusion* of the senses. Everything that is finite is illusion, all that which is infinite and eternal is reality. The objects of sense being ever delusive and fluctuating, cannot be a reality. Spirit alone is unchangeable, hence —alone is no illusion. The Hermetic axiom maintains that only the First Cause and its direct emanations, our spirits, are incorruptible and eternal. Christos, as a unity, is but an abstraction representing the collective aggregation of the numberless spirit-entities, which are the direct emanations of the infinite, invisible, incomprehensible FIRST CAUSE—the individual spirits of men, erroneously called the souls. They are the divine sons of God, of which some only overshadow mortal men—but this the majority—some remain forever planetary spirits, and some—the smaller and rare minority —unite themselves during life with some men. Such God-like beings as Gautama-Buddha, Jesus, Tissoo, Christna, and a few others had united themselves with their spirits permanently—hence, they became gods on earth. Others, such as Moses, Pythagoras, Apollonius, Plotinus, Confucius, Plato, Iamblichus, and some Christian saints, having at intervals been so united, have taken rank in history as demi-gods and leaders of mankind. The Greek Logos, the Hebrew Messiah, the Latin Verbum, and the Hindu Viradj are identically the same; they represent an idea of collective entities—of flames detached from the one eternal centre of light.

It is by the spirit of the teachings of both Buddha and Pythagoras, that we can so easily recognize the identity of their doctrines. The all-pervading, universal soul, the *Anima Mundi,* is Nirvana; and Buddha, as a generic name, is the anthropomorphized *monad* of Pythagoras. When resting in Nirvana, the final bliss, Buddha is the silent monad, dwelling in darkness and silence; he is also the formless Brahm, the sublime but *unknowable* Deity, which pervades invisibly the whole universe. Whenever it is manifested, desiring to impress itself upon humanity in a shape intelligent to our intellect, whether we call it an *avatar,* or a King Messiah, or a *permutation* of Divine Spirit, *Logos,* Christos, it is all one and the same thing. In each case it is "the Father" who is in the *Son,* and the Son in "the Father." The immortal spirit overshadows the mortal man. It enters into him, and pervading his whole being, makes of him a god, who descends into his earthly tabernacle. Every man may become a Buddha, says the doctrine. And so throughout the interminable series of ages we find now and then men who more or less succeed in *uniting* themselves "with God" as the expression goes, with their *own spirit,* as we ought to translate. The Buddhists call such men *Arhat.* Though the individual human spirits are numberless, collectively they are one, as every drop of water drawn out of the ocean, metaphorically speaking, may have an individual existence, and still be one with the rest of the drops going to form that ocean; for each human spirit is a scintilla of the one all-pervading light. This divine spirit animates the flower, the particle of granite on the mountain side, the lion, the man. The same spirit that animates the particle of dust, lurking latent in it, animates man, manifesting itself in him in its highest state of activity. This doctrine of God being the universal mind diffused through all things underlies all ancient philosophies.

Who is better fitted to impart to us the mysteries of after-death, so erroneously thought impenetrable, than those men who having, through self-discipline and purity of life and purpose, succeeded in uniting themselves with their "God," were afforded *some* glimpses, however imperfect, of the great truth? The love of truth is inherently the love of good; and so predominating over every desire of the soul, purifying it and assimilating it to the divine, thus governing every act of the individual, it raises man to a participation and communion with Divinity.

Men possessed of such knowledge and exercising such powers patiently toiled for something better than the vain glory of a pass-

ng fame. Seeking it not, they became immortal, as do all who labor for the good of the race, forgetful of mean self. Illuminated with the light of eternal truth, these rich-poor alchemists fixed their attention upon the things that lie beyond the common ken, recognizing nothing inscrutable but the First Cause, and finding no question unsolvable. To dare, to know, to will, and REMAIN SILENT, was their constant rule; to be beneficent, unselfish, and unpretending, were, with them, spontaneous impulses. Disdaining the rewards of petty traffic, spurning wealth, luxury, pomp, and worldly power, they aspired to knowledge as the most satisfying of all acquisitions.

NOTE.—The volume and page references to *Isis Unveiled*, from which the foregoing article is compiled, are, in the order of the excerpts, as follows: ii, 343; ii, 567; ii, 593; ii, 374; i, 39; i, v; ii, iv; i, vi; i, vii; i, 36; i, 467; i, 36; i, x; i, 36-7; i, 115; i, 328; i, 247; i, 433; ii, 368-9; i, 424; i, 425; ii, 41; i, 402; i, 615; ii, 635; ii, 80; i, 307; i, 560; ii, 121; ii, 536; ii, 84; ii, 369; ii, 402; i, xviii; ii, 157; ii, 158; i, 502; ii, 159; ii, 158-9; i, 291; i, 292; i, 289; i, 292; i, xiii; i, 66-7.

"THE FUNCTION OF ATTENTION"

People in general do not get the *meaning* of what is written, in the same way that they do not extract the *value* from their experiences. They make surface deductions and applications only. So they have little ability to apply the philosophy to daily life, nor can they see its practical value. They have to be helped to assimilate the fundamental principles if they are to realize right valuations and applications. Each has to eradicate his own faults in these as in other directions—not the faults of others. Until students set to work seriously on these lines they cannot find surety nor happiness. Theosophy and its application go together, if there is to be real progress.

—ROBERT CROSBIE

on the lookout

Life on Other Worlds

In *Saturday Review/World* for Nov. 30, 1974, Norman Cousins took editorial notice of the Cyclops project—a pretentious and vastly expensive undertaking (not yet funded) which would seek to receive radio messages from extra-terrestrial forms of intelligent life. Since the cost of the installation would run into billions, construction is not now anticipated, but Mr. Cousins' remarks are worth noticing:

> It is unscientific to say that within the many billions of galactic systems, ours is the only planet that supports life in advanced form. Nature shuns one of a kind as much as it abhors a vacuum. Infinity applies both to space and time. If anything occurs at one place or at one time in the universe, it is bound to occur in another, given infinite time and infinite space. The possible becomes the inevitable whenever there are no limits on the laws of chance.
>
> The same conditions that make life possible make life certain. The interaction of these conditions forces life into being. So long as these conditions continue to interact, life will persist or recur. Infinity supplies the stage.
>
> The underlying universal principle here is that infinity converts that which is possible into the inevitable. Therefore, only a limited notion of infinity inhibits the concept that life—life with intelligence and sensitivity and the capacity for perfectibility—exists elsewhere in the universe.

Bruno the Pioneer

The foregoing is Mr. Cousins' answer to the question: How can scientists be so confident that intelligent life exists on planets in distant solar systems? His reasoning seems sound enough, given the assumptions of the day, and also Mr. Cousins' own good will and desire to reach out in friendship to inhabitants of other regions of space. At the same time, one is moved by this interest to go back to the true founder, in Western history, of the conception of a plurality of inhabited worlds—Giordano Bruno. Bruno was an imaginative and courageous thinker who paid with his life for daring to develop the implications of Pythagorean philosophy and the

antheistic speculations of Nicholas of Cusa, while championing he Copernican theory. Bruno's whole philosophy, as Dorothea inger says in *Giordano Bruno* (1950), "is based on his view of n infinite universe with an infinity of worlds." All the worlds are live, since all are constituted of an infinity of monads, pursuing evelopment congruent to their inner nature.

Another Sort of Communication

But Bruno would have sought no elaborate apparatus for communicating with other planets in outer space. He felt that ordinary ommunication might not be advisable for humans, since, as he ointed out in one of his books, we learn from experience "that t is best for the living creatures of this world that nature hath istributed their diverse kinds throughout the seas and mountains." raffic among them, when artificially stimulated, seems to remove nstead of adding benefit, since "communication tendeth rather to edouble vices than to augment virtues." Yet Bruno did not deny hat there could be a subtler sort of communication for those who are able to remove certain impediments in themselves to the flow of hought and idea. He maintained that all beings in the universe (solar system?) are united by the common substance of souls, diffused "throughout immensity," so that the individual soul may "apprehend most distant species, in an instant and without motion, nor doth the eye or aught therefrom suddenly advance to the stars, nor aught from the stars to the eye." It seems evident that this sixteenth-century thinker offered a far more philosophical view of interplanetary relations than the means contemplated by twentieth-century scientists.

Education Through Art

From time to time useful accounts of the sort of educational influences that would characterize a better age are put into print. Sir Herbert Read wrote well about the ancient Greek method of basing the education of the young on experience of the all-pervasive harmonies of Nature—so well represented in the geometrical forms which may be seen throughout the kingdoms. The stress, by Read, was on the benefits of art education, and the value to children of learning the expressive arts is self-evident. While "art" can provide elevation and discipline to the psychic nature, it needs the inner inspiration of moral philosophy, but this recognition still remains a perception of the few.

Artist and Craftsman

Meanwhile, there are some artists in whom this conception seems implicit, and whose warmth and generosity of spirit have a clear moral quality that undoubtedly enriches their art. One such artist is the distinguished violinist, Yehudi Menuhin, who contributed to the *Saturday Review/World* for Dec. 14, 1974, a thoughtful discussion of the part that may be played by music and craftsmanship in everyday life:

> Rhythm in music, proportion and movement in other arts —these are the assurances of continuity, of direction, and of design or logic in everyday life. Without these assurances life must often seem to the bewildered individual and innocent sufferer a "buzzing, booming confusion," without rhyme or reason. Thus not only the creative artist and poet, the musician and painter, but also the humblest craftsman *serves* his society. . . . Our mothers should sing to their children, and our children should sing together. Perhaps no other activity is so wholesome, for it engages completely our inner mobility—breath and circulation—our lungs and heart. Our spirit and sense of community are immeasurably enhanced by this exercise: The compelling and total discipline of rhythm and pitch further the sense of union and communal solidarity.

Importance of the Individual

Those who work with others rather than with materials, he says, should first learn to use their hands "to manipulate clay and stone and to handle the good earth with gratitude and respect." The resulting sense of solidarity, Mr. Menuhin implies, is preliminary to a higher creative capacity that originates with the individual, even when expressed in cooperative endeavor. He says:

> Perhaps one day the artist in man will dominate man the political animal. Let us never forget that the bigger units of administration only serve to organize, apply and develop what man alone, the individual in the unique cultural environment, creates. It is the smaller and smallest unit that has vision and that creates, the larger that applies but *cannot* create. Ultimately, it is upon the individual we depend. Perhaps it is thinking very far ahead to say so, but eventually the nation-state must cede part of its autonomy both to the larger world unit and to the smaller neighborhood-community. On one hand, there must be international cooperation in various fields—food, pollution, space, resources. On the other hand, the nations must encourage regional autonomy—languages, dialects, art, music, theater, dress, diet, way of life, and all human, humane, and cultural activities.

Present in this perceptive view of how the practice of the arts might serve human society seems a deep intuition of the meaning of being human—a recognition of both the responsibilities and possibilities which are inherent in the soul-nature of the individual. Mr. Menuhin speaks quite naturally of the cultural attainments that would characterize a restored Golden Age. His work, one may suspect, has brought intimations of this quality of life to many.

The Failure of Cities

In "Our Cycle and the Next" (a *Lucifer* editorial), H.P.B. contrasted the desirable social attitudes of small communities with the artificial and ineffectual "welfare" policies of modern urban centers, in dealing with poverty and want. Now modern critics are beginning to see the wisdom of this general view. The importance of small communities as seedbeds of character and responsibility has been the lifelong theme of the work of Arthur Morgan, and this idea has had recent emphasis and development in the writings of E. F. Schumacher. From a review in *Resurgence* (January/February), we learn that Leopold Kohr, a humanist economist, is persuaded that a city should be "a *pedestrian city*—dense, tense, exciting, close and kept that way by a nucleus of sufficient æsthetic appeal." In his book, *The City as Convivial Centre*, Mr. Kohr says that while there is nothing inherently evil about urban life, cities throughout the world are in a state of disintegration because they have long ceased to serve the purposes and provide the opportunities for which they are uniquely fitted. Instead they have become the focus of destructive forces. The causes, he says, are embedded in continued neglect of the needs of the people. The *Resurgence* reviewer explains:

> Leopold Kohr goes to the heart of the matter: the town planners of the past were capable of constructing an urban nucleus; today's planners succeed in everything *except* this one essential. Their failure to create a communal nucleus is a result of their failure to acknowledge the perennial human need for conviviality, religiosity and politics, along with the concomitant of trade, as constituents of the good urban life. All of these needs in their diversity must be catered for within a certain critical spatial density. Hence taverns and theatres, churches and city halls, combined with the market place, make up the centre in the form of a square. Once this nucleus is established, the rest takes care of itself by the natural process of duplication of squares, each with its own individuality and more specific

function, together all forming pools of urban life where the currents of traffic are forced to eddy and pause.

Anti-Human Consequences

Modern cities have preserved only the least important of these functions—that of trade—which wholly dominates urban life. As a consequence, cities fail to provide the diversity which nourishes all levels of human nature. Seeking satisfaction of other needs, people are obliged to live far from where they work, but traveling long distances is costly and time-consuming. The *Resurgence* writer continues:

> The pervading and overwhelming sense which our towns convey is that of everything being peripheral to everything else. There is an absence of focus about the contemporary urban scene, not merely in the case of such extremes as Los Angeles where the going is well over half the fun, but increasingly so in the heart of places which had an identity within living memory. The City of London with its improved traffic flow gives the impression of being half-way to some other place which, in turn, never quite materialises. Bloomsbury was a place; now it is a semi-place. The traffic islands at the northern end of Berkeley Square have confirmed it as an urban inconvenience.

Environmental Needs

Mr. Kohr's approach seems a practical basis for assessing what has happened to our cities, and for planning reconstruction. Meanwhile, we may ask if the fields of activity which he assigns to cities have counterparts in man's nature. Would the right sort of community life aid in their development? Henry Winthrop, writing in the same issue of *Resurgence*, makes this observation:

> . . . Smallness of size may be a necessary condition but it is certainly not a sufficient one to provide a sense of community. It is important to note that if a small group's sense of community is preserved largely at the cost of barring the outside world from its doorsteps, then it is not the smallness of its population or the intensity of its cultural inbreeding that is preserving the virtues of neighborliness, mutual aid and good will that it displays daily. Rather it is the impermeable membrane of social indifference to what the outside world has to offer that is preserving such virtues, assuring the community's stability and daily making meaningful the traditions it lives by.
>
> . . . When the socio-cultural isolation of a small community begins to be broken, its identity becomes shaken, its traditions become less meaningful and its person-to-person relationships will be increasingly questioned. By the same token *the small*

community in mass society tends to *lose* the virtues of neighborliness, mutual aid and mutual understanding that a small community, living by tradition but embedded in a larger but changing world may display.

The City Misconceived

Still another *Resurgence* contributor, John Papworth, says that the isolation of modern cities is regarded by many as "some kind of ultimate freedom." He writes an "Open Letter" to show the inverted thinking in this outlook:

> In reality it is merely the freedom of social (and of course frequently moral) irresponsibility such as may be found in any barrack room (although even a barrack room is a community of sorts); it is the freedom of social abnegation, the freedom of non-relationship, the freedom of non-involvement and, of course, a freedom purchased at the horrendous price of being quite unable to resist being manipulated.
>
> We may note in passing that this illusory freedom of political and social passivity, shared as much by the family in the high-rise block as by the transient occupant of a bedsitter, is what makes possible the destruction of the fantastic wealth of London's architectural heritage, and that of many other cities, now proceeding under our noses.

Mr. Papworth observes that the growth of mass political parties and mass unions is symptomatic of the reaction to this frustration, evidence of population-wide stifling of individual initiative. He goes on to say that no "plan" can provide the unity that would support the ideal society, which should rather consist, he thinks, of the maximum possible diversities, loosely held together by structures responsive to direction and control by individual human beings.

Termites of History

In her article, "The Tidal Wave," H.P.B. spoke of the increasing number of writers—some of them "foremost representatives of thought and learning"—who were then contesting materialistic doctrines and rising to "defend the rights of Spirit to reign over matter." Inspection of the books and periodical literature of that time (1889) brings confirmation of what she said, but a few decades later the tide had subsided. Save for an exception or two, by the 1920's materialism seemed again triumphant, with the remarks of H.P.B. in *The Secret Doctrine* (I, 676) applying in all directions. She wrote:

> While Materialists deny everything in the universe, save matter, Archæologists are trying to dwarf antiquity, and seek

> to destroy every claim to ancient Wisdom by tampering with Chronology. Our present-day Orientalists and Historical writers are to ancient History that which the white ants are to the buildings in India. More dangerous even than those Termites, the modern Archæologists—the "authorities" of the future in the matter of Universal History—are preparing for the History of past nations the fate of certain edifices in tropical countries: "History will tumble down and break into atoms in the lap of the twentieth century, devoured to its foundations by her annalists," said Michelet. Very soon, indeed, under their combined efforts, it will share the fate of those ruined cities in both Americas, which lie deeply buried under impassable virgin forests. Historical facts will remain as concealed from view by the inextricable jungles of modern hypotheses, denials and scepticism.

An Unimpressive Mystery

It was not very long, historically speaking, before Michelet's—and H.P.B.'s—prophecy came true. Writing in the *American Scholar* for the Spring of 1939, under the title of "The 'New History' and 'Past Everything'," Crane Brinton remarked that the "young Turks" among the historians of that day had decided that historians must not only write about the past, but include *everything* about the past, with the consequence that their work became so heavy with factual detail that it no longer interested anyone and could be used or understood by only a very few—mostly other scholars who practiced the same obscure trade. As Prof. Brinton put it: "History seemed, by about 1900, to have gained in scope and accuracy at the expense of its audience, to have become almost as much of a mystery to the man in the street as the natural sciences it aped, and a much less impressive mystery." The problem, quite plainly, was that without a *theory* of history—a conception of unfolding meaning in human events—there remained nothing to do except swamp the reader with encyclopedias of "facts."

Theory "Indecent"

At about the same time, Clyde Kluckhohn, a Harvard anthropologist, observed in *Philosophy of Science* (July, 1939) that in his field, which is a source for historians, "To suggest that something is theoretical is to suggest that it is slightly indecent." Here too, as in other areas of the social sciences, there was little beside the stubborn practice of empirical collection of "data," to the point where the discipline itself foundered from lack of a sense of meaning, to say nothing of the fate of the general reader, who

long ago had been indifferently left behind. There was indeed no guiding principle in the social sciences, and except for ideological controversy—history written for or against Marxist claims—denials and skepticism were applied to any interpretative account of human affairs. Few there were in those days to comment, as Hartley Burr Alexander remarked, that Plato was wiser than Aristotle, since Plato recognized the dramatic character of human affairs and employed myths to convey meanings, while Aristotle saw experience as "static," as something that could be recorded by the drawings of an architect.

A New Spirit

Today the practitioners of the social sciences are beginning to manifest a very different mood. The common explanation of the renewed quest for meaning among historians, economists, and scholars in related areas is that the impact of Existentialist thought, and of phenomenological thinkers such as Husserl and Heidigger, has stirred a fresh interest in humanist inquiry. On the surface this is no doubt the case. But in the Theosophic view of history and of the working of occult cycles, it seems likely that this fundamental change is more of a response to inner egoic stimulus, such as, for example, overtook Tolstoy in middle life during the latter part of the nineteenth century, and which moved others of that period to expressions which justified what H.P.B. wrote in "The Tidal Wave." Today there are various examples of the new spirit in the social sciences. Joan Robinson, for one, a Cambridge economist, said in *Freedom and Necessity* (1970), distinguishing between the "hard" sciences such as physics and the study of human beings:

> . . . even if the social scientists could improve their methodologies and raise the level of intellectual discipline, it would not be possible for them to provide a basis for "social engineering" comparable to that which the physicists have provided for space engineering. The reason is obvious. The objective of an engineering program is given to the engineer; for the social scientist the objective is precisely what he has to discuss. . . .
>
> The function of social science is quite different from that of the natural sciences—it is to provide society with an organ of self-consciousness.

Going Beneath the Surface

A contributor to the recently issued Resource Paper (No. 24) of the Association of American Geographers, *Values in Geography*, Yi-Fu Tuan, who teaches at the University of Minnesota, points

out the limitations of the conventional methods of geographic research:

> Spatial and other positivist techniques are well suited to the description of the upper [surface] levels of social reality. The deeper we probe the less suitable these objective (scientific) methods become, and we need to resort, increasingly, to the methods of phenomenological description. Geographers tend to ignore these depth levels and confine their attention to the study of surface features. . . . In recent years some geographers have shown an interest in institutions, symbols, group attitudes and values that underlie the observable phenomena of buildings, fields, and population clusters. We have yet to probe the human depths.

What are these "human depths"? They include "spontaneous, innovative, and creative collective behavior"—which might easily be termed the crucial aspect of human history. As Crane Brinton remarked: "History after all deals with matters not technical and remote like those that concern the mathematician but with the stuff of daily life."

Philosophic Questionings

A passage from the American philosopher, Charles Hartshorne, quoted by Yi-Fu Tuan, also shows the new spirit emerging among scholars. Both these teachers seem wholly without inhibition in discussing freedom of the will—an attitude that was hardly possible in academic circles twenty or thirty years ago. The Minnesota geographer says:

> In the popular conception, freedom is a name for autonomous acts, which, however, mean little more than the self-assertive movements of deluded selfish will. True freedom is a virtue, impossible without clear vision and the domination of the selfish impulse. It is creativity, and not the blind assertion of will. As Charles Hartshorne puts it: "Freedom is more than voluntariness, it is creation—and while aspects of voluntary act, which is free in the sense of being unconstrained and consciously satisfactory to the agent, may be causally determined, the entire concrete experience must always have some aspects of creative self-determination. . . . Reality is in the making in the sense that causes are less determinate than effects, therefore less rich in value."

Some Parallels

We may recognize here what seem almost paraphrases of certain Theosophical ideas or teachings. In relation to what Yi-Fu Tuan says about "true freedom," we recall the following from

"Psychic and Noetic Action": " 'Mind' is *manas,* or rather its lower reflection, which whenever it disconnects itself, for the time being, with *kama,* becomes the guide of the highest mental faculties, and is the organ of free-will in physical man." Then, to parallel the final sentence quoted from Prof. Hartshorne, there is the statement concerning Reality (Parabrahm) early in *The Secret Doctrine* (I, 6):

> Parabrahm is not "God," because It is not *a* God. "It is that which is supreme, and not supreme (paravara)," explains Mandukya Upanishad (2.28). IT is "Supreme" as CAUSE, not supreme as effect."

The sentence with which H.P.B. concludes the paragraph about the ruin of history by materialistic scholars may be repeated here, both for its general encouragement and because of what seems its confirmation—at least partial confirmation—in the present. She said (I, 676):

> But very happily *actual* History repeats herself, for she proceeds, like everything else, in cycles; and dead facts and events deliberately drowned in the sea of modern scepticism will ascend once more and reappear on the surface. . . .

Effects of Marijuana Use

A valuable summary of informed medical opinion on the effects of using marijuana was published by Frank Goble in the February *Letter* of the Thomas Jefferson Research Center in Pasadena, Calif. The following is quoted from a research psychiatrist at the University of California in Berkeley, Dr. Harvey Powellson, who draws on the records of a clinic which saw between two and three thousand students a year, between 1965 and 1972. After describing long-term consequences of taking this drug in an originally bright and talented law student, Dr. Powellson said:

> My stance towards the use of marijuana has shifted to the extent that I now think it is the most dangerous drug we must contend with for the following reasons:
>
> (1) Its early use is beguiling. It gives the illusion of feeling good. The user is not aware of the beginning loss of mental function. I have never seen an exception to the observation that marijuana impairs the user's ability to judge the loss of his own mental functioning.
>
> (2) After one to three years of continuous use, the ability to think has become so impaired that pathological forms of thinking begin to take over the entire thought process.
>
> (3) Chronic heavy use leads to paranoid thinking.

(4) Chronic heavy use leads to deterioration in body and mental functioning which is difficult and perhaps impossible to reverse.

(5) For reasons I can't elucidate here, its use leads to delusional system thinking which has inherent in it the strong need to seduce and proselytise others. I have rarely seen a regular marijuana user who wasn't actively "pushing."

"Deep Centers of the Brain"

Another authority quoted is Hardin B. Jones, Ph.D., profe sor of medical physics and physiology at U.C. in Berkeley. He h interviewed more than 16,000 drug users, mostly of cannab (marijuana). Dr. Jones cited research by a Dr. Heath, showi that "use of cannabis results in persistent poisoning of the de centers of the brain necessary for the awareness of pleasure." D Jones then said:

This fits the observations of many of us that marijuana users have severe sensory deprivation, and that this symptom of marijuana intoxication is the slowest and least likely to recover. Dr. Heath has, in a sense, shown by direct measurement that cannabis poisons the very part of the brain that allows full awareness of being alive. . . .

I must say, with regard to my 16,000 users, it is rare to find someone that does not show symptoms of this very tragic change. Hopefully, these symptoms will be reversible. . . .

I believe that the rapidity with which the use of marijuana has spread across our nation in less than 10 years is the result of a massive and sustained campaign, involving a small but influential number of academic propagandists, the media, the entertainment industry, and the new left.

Copies of this summary may be obtained by writing to t Thomas Jefferson Research Center, 1143 North Lake Ave., Pa adena, Calif. 91104. The material was taken from testimony giv at Senate Committee Hearings in May and June of 1974. It w published in full by the Government Printing Office and is ava able at $4.00 from the Superintendent of Documents in Washi ton. The title is "Marijuana-Hashish Epidemic and Its Impact United States Security."